



Australian Bureau of Statistics

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August 2007 CensusAtSchool Newsletter - Edition No. 19

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Making CensusAtSchool 2008 even better

CensusAtSchool 2008 will begin first term next year with the second questionnaire available to teachers and students. As well as the 11 international questions that will allow your students to make comparisons across countries, many questions will remain unaltered to also allow comparisons over time. For this reason we hope to keep changes to the questionnaire to a minimum. However your feedback can help make CensusAtSchool even better.



The overwhelming response from teachers about the 2006 questionnaire has been positive. Teachers from across many curriculum areas have found CensusAtSchool to be invaluable in their classrooms. Extensive research was conducted with practising teachers to ensure that the data collected would be meaningful for them, their students and their curricula. However we would like to hear your suggestions to improve the questionnaire. Were there any particular questions that students had trouble understanding? Did primary age students have difficulties with particular sections? Would you like more questions that yield continuous data?

Please send your feedback to censusatschool@abs.gov.au by the end of September, 2007.

During October and November 2007 ABS Education Services will be conducting teacher focus groups in capital cities to trial the new questionnaire. If you would like to take part in one of these after hours groups, email your interest to censusatschool@abs.gov.au. You will be compensated for your time.

Are you having problems accessing CensusAtSchool?

A number of teachers have contacted us because they are not able to access the Random Sampler after they press the 'Accept' button. If you are having a problems such as this, please let us know. We will follow up the issue and rectify the problem. CensusAtSchool is a valuable resource across many curriculum areas and we want to help you use it.

CensusAtSchool Professional Development AAMT Biennial Conference in Hobart

The CensusAtSchool presence at the Australian Association of Mathematics Teachers Biennial Conference in Hobart in early July was a time to meet many teachers and a chance to demonstrate the various ways of using CensusAtSchool in the classroom. Much interest was shown in the use of the Random Sampler for accessing the data and in its use not only for students at Years 5 to 10, but also its application in the senior school. Thanks to the Tasmanian Office of ABS for organising the displays and meeting with many teachers during the four days of the conference. Tasmanian schools can be confident that there are local people who can help them use CensusAtSchool.



PD sessions for teachers

While in Tasmania, our teacher consultant Brian Morphett took the opportunity to meet local teachers who are using CensusAtSchool. He also conducted a number of professional development sessions for interested schools.

The Random Sampler – Do You Remember how to change a CSV file to an Excel file?

For those of you who are not as IT savvy, it can be easy to forget the steps involved in collecting, saving and manipulating a random sample. Copy and save this "How To" on changing a csv file to an Excel file. (Don't forget that Prepared Samples are also available if collecting your own random sample is not an option for you or your students.)

How to Convert a CSV File to an Excel File.

1. Request a random sample using the Random Sampler
2. Right click on the csv file: 'cas_sample_xxxxxxxx.csv'
3. Select 'Save target as...'
4. In 'Save as' window select
 - a. In Save in menu box select: 'Desktop'
 - b. In Save as type menu box select: 'All files'
5. Click 'Save'
6. From your desktop, double click the file to open it

The file now looks like an Excel file, but it is still a csv file.

7. Click 'File' then 'Save as'
- a In Save in box choose where to save your file (this may be to disc, or a particular drive)
- b In File Name box give the file a name
- c In Save as type menu box select: Excel workbook

8. Click 'Save'

If you are able to organise a group of teachers (from your own and neighbouring schools), ABS Education Services may be able to provide a professional development session in your area. Check the Professional Development pages or contact the CensusAtSchool team. A professional development CD and DVD are also available to assist teachers to use CensusAtSchool. These are **free** and available on request from Education Services.

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An idea for your classroom...

Using CensusAtSchool random samples in Senior Mathematics

The ability to take a random sample from the CensusAtSchool data allows activities to be developed that are suitable for students in Years 11 and 12. For example, students from **Kangaroo Island Community Education - Kingscote Campus** have analysed random samples taken from CensusAtSchool data to make comparisons between students. They analysed heights of Year 9 girls versus Year 9 boys, travel times for different sets of students, and even differences between Australian and UK students (using the UK CensusAtSchool data). Confidence intervals and hypothesis testing techniques were used to evaluate these questions. The binomial distribution was used in conjunction with hypothesis testing to analyse comparative questions between sets of data.

CensusAtSchool contains many types of questions that could provide suitable data for these types of analyses. For example, comparing male and female attitudes to environmental or water issues; comparing how students from various states spend their leisure time, and many more. Taking random samples across the many topic areas of the CensusAtSchool questionnaire presents investigative opportunities for teachers at senior levels with data that is engaging for students.

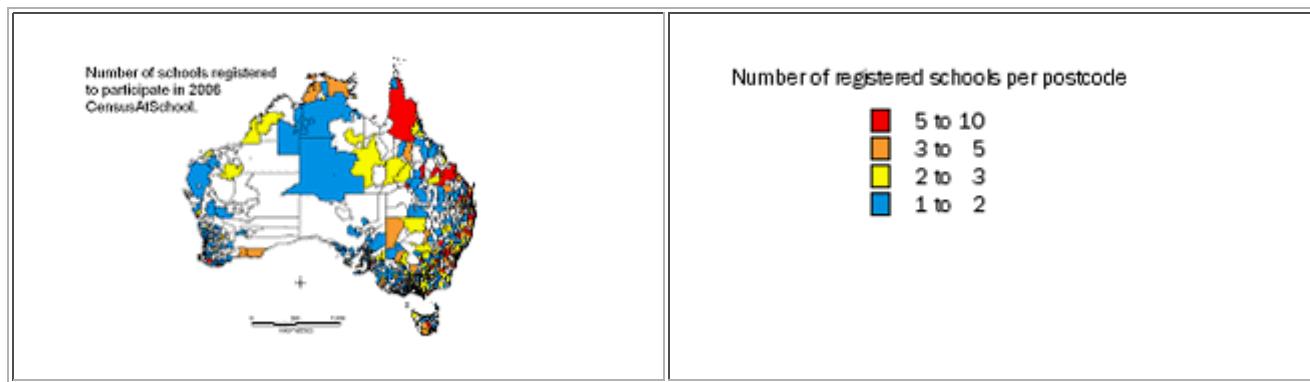
What are you doing with CensusAtSchool?

We know that there are many innovative and exciting uses of CensusAtSchool happening across Australia. In fact you can read some examples on the Using CensusAtSchool page. The CensusAtSchool team would love to hear what you are doing with the data. If you would like to share your ideas with other CensusAtSchool users, please contact us.

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Around Australia with CensusAtSchool

CensusAtSchool 2006 extends right across Australia, as the map below shows. There is participation in all states and territories, very few regions have no schools registered and even remote areas are represented.



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New, improved Education pages on line now

Following extensive usability testing with teachers in 2006, we have revamped the ABS Education Services web pages. There is now direct access to the education pages for students (www.abs.gov.au/students) and teachers (www.abs.gov.au/teachers). You can access CensusAtSchool from either the teacher or student pages. (Soon there will be a direct entry address for CensusAtSchool - watch this space.)

The education pages include games, real ABS data sets that have been tailored for student use, statistical resources, classroom activities (organised by state/territory, year level and subject) and much, much more. Have a look - and send us your feedback at education@abs.gov.au

If you have any questions or general CensusAtSchool project enquiries, please contact ABS Education Services, CensusAtSchool Team by email censusatschool@abs.gov.au or on free call 1800 623 273 between 9:00am and 5:00pm (AEST) Monday to Friday.

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About this Release

The CensusAtSchool newsletter is a service for users of the CensusAtSchool online learning project. It provides useful support information, project updates and community feedback on how the project is being used by teachers and students in schools across Australia. Each issue contains a feature article, a teacher support article and a general interest article, along with project updates, teacher tips and tricks and other related material. For more information on the CensusAtSchool project, visit <https://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/cashome.nsf/Home/Home>

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